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## POLITICAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY.

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### THE POLITICAL IDEAS OF THE PURITANS. II.

**I**N the three southern colonies of New England, the democratic character of Puritanism found from the first much more perfect expression than in the others. The towns whose people migrated to Connecticut had shared in the movement of the freemen against the clergy and magistrates in Massachusetts. The emigrants carried with them a logical democratic theory, and were prepared to put it into practice. The leading exponent of this theory was Thomas Hooker, the Hartford pastor, and from him, more than from any other individual, came the impulse which led to its realization. What he did was the practical outgrowth of the theory of church government which later he so fully expounded. On May 31, 1638, his famous sermon was preached before the General Court at Hartford, in which he argued "that the choice of public magistrates belongs with the people by God's own allowance"; that "the privilege of election, which belongs to the people, therefore must not be exercised according to their humors, but according to the blessed will and law of God";<sup>1</sup> that "they who have power to appoint officers and magistrates, it is their power also to set the bounds and limitations of the power and place into which they call them." The reasons on which he based this doctrine were: "because the foundation of society is laid firstly in the free consent of the people; because by a free choice the hearts of the people will be more inclined to the love of the persons chosen and more ready to yield obe-

<sup>1</sup> Connecticut Historical Collection, I, 20; from shorthand notes by Henry Woolcott.

dience"; because the people will consider themselves bound by their "duty and engagement." After thus stating the essentials of the democratic theory of government, Hooker closed with an appeal to the court to use the liberty God had given it. Seven months later the Fundamental Orders<sup>1</sup> in their perfected form were adopted, — the document so celebrated as the first American constitution. According to this, political power under God is derived from the free consent of the people. The freemen of the towns declare that they "do associate and conjoin" themselves "to be as one public state or commonwealth." For themselves, their successors and all others who might from time to time be annexed to them, they

enter into combination and confederation together to maintain and preserve the liberty and purity of our Lord Jesus; which we now profess, as also the discipline of the churches . . . now practiced amongst us; as also in our civil affairs to be guided and governed according to such laws, rules, orders and decrees [as appear in the document which follows].

In the laws of Connecticut correct religious belief was not made a condition of full citizenship. The governor alone was required to be a church member. Still, both in theory and practice, the Calvinistic idea of the connection between church and state was maintained. Hooker taught that both in his books and in his sermons. The General Court of Connecticut legislated freely on religious matters. But the spirit both of its laws and of their administration was more liberal than that shown in Massachusetts. The clergy did not try, as in the latter colony, to control political affairs and make all other interests subserve their own. It does not appear that the custom of consulting them on matters of policy prevailed long or to any great extent. Hooker died in a few years after the government of the colony was founded, and no ecclesiastical statesman appeared to take his place. But he lived long enough to see fully realized in his colony the democratic tendencies of Calvinism.

<sup>1</sup>Connecticut Records, I, 20–25.

The same political ideas were carried into practice at New Haven, though with a more intensely theocratic spirit. In the so-called "plantation covenant," under which Eaton, Davenport and their companions lived during the first year after their arrival, the principle was set forth that, "as in matters which concern the gathering and ordering of a church, so likewise in all public offices which concern civil order, . . . we would all of us be ordered by those rules which the Scripture holds forth to us."<sup>1</sup> In the famous meeting of June 4, 1639, the government of both state and church was organized. The two in fact were from the first identical, as none but church members were admitted to the position of freemen, and for four months the seven "pillars" of the church were also the only magistrates. The article upon which the exercise of ecclesiastical power was based was the sixth in the general covenant. Each article of this document was separately propounded by Davenport and agreed to, and at the end it was ratified as a whole by a final vote and signed by all the freemen. Nothing could be more logically exact than this process, and in full harmony with it was the policy of the New Haven colony until absorbed by Connecticut.

A share in the development of Rhode Island, as well as in that of the other New England colonies, must be assigned to Puritanism. For Roger Williams and William Coddington, the one the founder of Providence and the other of the first settlement on Aquidneck, were both Calvinists in their theological beliefs. It was for political far more than religious heresy that Williams was banished from Massachusetts.<sup>2</sup> Coddington was a member of the Boston church until the Antinomian controversy broke out, and it was chiefly because of the arbitrary conduct of the General Court in the matter of the petition that he persisted in his opposition until he was banished.

<sup>1</sup> New Haven Records, I, 12.

<sup>2</sup> See formulated charges in Winthrop, I, 193, 204. Also his sentence and the reasons therefor in Mass. Record, I, 160. Cotton in his Reply to Mr. Williams, gives substantially the same account, pp. 27 *et seq.* In religious belief Williams was a thorough Calvinist. This he showed conclusively in his debate with the Quakers, 1672; cf. George Fox digged out of his Burrows, and introduction by Diman, Narragansett Club Publications, vol. v.

Roger Williams was a pronounced Separatist and an ultra-democrat. He believed that all civil power proceeded from the people, that governments could exist only so long as they were entrusted with power by the people, and that men could not be deprived of their natural freedom by tyrants.<sup>1</sup> The settlement which he founded was for four years governed under a compact,<sup>2</sup> in which the inhabitants of the town agreed to submit to "all such orders or agreements as shall be made for the public good of the body in an orderly way by the major consent of the present inhabitants, masters of families," and of such as should in the future be admitted to citizenship. In 1640 an agreement to settle all disputes by arbitration was drawn up and signed by the citizens. To the magistrates, however, was reserved the right to use force in cases of obduracy. Williams and his associates frequently availed themselves of this right, and so kept the spirit of insubordination measurably subdued. Coddington and his followers based their government at Portsmouth on a compact<sup>3</sup> in which they promised, wholly after the manner of their Puritan brethren, to form a body politic and to submit themselves to God and his laws. They expressly referred to the compact made by the Jewish people as a model which they wished to follow. Substantially the same course was taken at the settlement of Newport. When these two townships united in 1641, they proclaimed themselves to be

a democracy or popular government ; *i.e.* it is in the power of the body of freemen orderly assembled, or the major part of them, to make or constitute just laws . . . and to depute from among themselves such ministers as shall see them faithfully executed.

Gorton, the founder of the town of Warwick, was reputed to be an Antinomian. He certainly was an erratic character, who caused trouble wherever he went. Like some of the agitators in England he carried the right of private judgment, the individualistic side of Puritanism, to a dangerous excess. Still he was a genuine product of the movement. How far his

<sup>1</sup> Bloody Tenent of Persecution. Reprint by Hanserd Knollys Society, pp. 214, 215.

<sup>2</sup> Rhode Island Records, I, 14.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* I, 52.

conduct was due to genuine convictions, and how far to resentment at the extreme injustice he suffered from Massachusetts, it is hard to decide. At any rate, so extreme a democrat was he that in his township he would acknowledge no stronger bond than that of arbitration. When the three groups of settlements about Narragansett Bay united under the Rhode Island charter, they formed a colony in which democratic principles were carried, according to the opinion of its neighbors, almost to the verge of anarchy.

The practice of Rhode Island respecting religious toleration and the ideas which proceeded from her citizens on that subject were the chief source of this opinion. Massachusetts had adopted the Presbyterian theory of the relation between church and state. In the persecution of heretics some of her divines and magistrates showed a zeal equal to that of Knox. Plymouth and Connecticut followed a course which corresponded rather to the liberal sentiments of Robinson. But in all three of these colonies the interests of the state were believed to be imperilled by the presence of Anabaptists, Quakers, Socinians and other sectaries, whose development, like that of their persecutors, had proceeded from an assertion of the right of private judgment. Those who held doctrines or adopted forms of worship for which authority could not be found in the Word of God as interpreted by Calvin and his disciples, it was considered to be the imperative duty of the state to remove, as sources of moral contagion infinitely more dangerous than physical disease.

It was obviously more difficult for the Independents to defend a policy of persecution, than for the Anglicans or Presbyterians. Had they not asserted the right of private judgment for themselves against both these parties in England? Had not many of them sought the tolerant protection of Holland, that they might there enjoy freedom of worship? Their form of church organization, too, was favorable to local effort and freedom. Unless modified, as it was in New England, it would lead to local differences both in practice and belief. In order to explain the growth of toleration it is not necessary to credit the

religious sects of the seventeenth century with philosophic breadth of view or with an humanitarian spirit. Save in the works of a few individuals, like the early latitudinarians in the English church, these are not to be found. The spirit shown in the works of Calvin himself compares very favorably with that of any of his successors. They all taught that salvation could not be obtained outside the true church, and called upon the state to co-operate with them in their work. But soon a practical difficulty appeared. The Reformation destroyed the religious unity of Europe. The coherence of society on that side was broken. A great variety of sects appeared, each claiming a hearing. Such a multiplication of forms of dissent, each more individualistic than its predecessors, made the enforcement of uniformity at first difficult and then impossible. Forms of persecution became milder, and the classes affected less numerous. Social interests other than those connected with religion rose to prominence. Statutes against heresy were less rigidly enforced. Gradually they were allowed to become obsolete and at last were repealed. In this way the need of society for religious growth was satisfied. Men became accustomed to religious toleration when they saw it existing around them, and adapted their views to facts. These tendencies had been at work some time, both in England and in the Puritan colonies, when they found expression in the writings of the apostle of toleration, Roger Williams. His controversy with John Cotton was an important event in the history of New England opinion on the subject. Both were representative men, and, though Cotton shrank from some of the conclusions to which his theory led, they fairly express the divergent opinions which were developing within the Calvinistic body.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The books and pamphlets written during this controversy, and from which the following account of it is taken, were: 1. *The Controversie concerning Liberty of Conscience in Matters of Religion truly stated by Mr. John Cotton* (London, 1646). 2. *The Bloody Tenent of Persecution*, by Williams (London, 1644). 3. *A Reply to Mr. Williams*, by Cotton (undated); *The Bloody Tenent washed and made White in the Blood of the Lambe*, by Cotton (London, 1647). 4. *The Bloody Tenent yet more Bloody*, by Williams (London, 1652). Williams' writings have been reprinted by the Narragansett Club.

In the course of the discussion Cotton admitted that there were two cases in which the toleration of evil, *i.e.* of error, was justifiable: (1) when the state was too weak to resist it; (2) when by tolerating it greater evils were prevented than would arise if it were suppressed. He also admitted that persecution could reach only the bodies, not the souls of men. Therefore, he said, he would not establish the church with the help of persecution, but, when once established, such means might be resorted to in its defence. He of course condemned the persecution of the Puritans in England, because they held the true doctrine. He compared their treatment with the unmerited sufferings which the Jews inflicted upon Christ. In such cases he believed the persecuted were entitled to the right of passive resistance. He was also ready to make certain formal distinctions. The essentials of the faith must be upheld, but in matters of inferior importance some differences of judgment might be allowed. In reference to non-essentials also a distinction must be made between the person who, though he held erroneous views respecting them, was meek and peaceable, and one who boldly uttered them, so as thereby to disturb the peace. The former should be tolerated "till God may be pleased to manifest his truth to him"; the latter should be punished.

But Cotton's mind was evidently disturbed by the case of the unbeliever who, though otherwise peaceable, should after admonitions still cling to his heresy. It was difficult to justify the punishment of such a one as an heretic, and at the same time defend the claim which the Puritan had made in England. The cases seemed exactly parallel. But Cotton brought forth from his theological armory the following remarkable argument. He said in effect that by the admonition, that is, the presentation of the truth, the conscience of the unbeliever had been convinced of error, but his corrupt will had then interposed and caused him to hold out stubbornly against the truth. Consequently, if the magistrate took him in hand, it could not be said that he was persecuted, because that term is applied only to the constraining of conscience. Say rather that he was punished as a "culpable and damnable" person, a turbulent heretic and



schismatic, guilty of seduction and blasphemy, which lead to spiritual adultery. In other words, Cotton tried to prove that what is usually called persecution was the punishment of rebellion, a crime the penalty of which the offender brought upon his own head. The use of so fallacious an argument as this indicates that even John Cotton did not fully believe the doctrine which he had set out to defend. He was trying to explain away its enormity, or conceal it by means of metaphysical subtleties. Though he relied upon Augustine and the earlier Calvinists as authorities, he did not meet the issue so directly as did they. He also strenuously maintained that a state church had not been established in Massachusetts, and that freedom of conscience was not prohibited there.

After full allowance is made for his admissions, Cotton's theory is substantially this. No deviations from the essentials of the faith are to be tolerated. Outspoken opposition to less important doctrines may be silenced in the interests of public peace and order. Dissenters who have been sufficiently admonished may be said to have become wedded to their errors, and are sources of evil against which the community must be protected. Thus the only opportunity granted for the utterance of dissenting opinions was that during which the person who held them was subject to admonition. The process of admonishing was called in the speech of the time "dealing" with the offender, and was resorted to as soon as possible after symptoms of heresy made their appearance. Just here also one must remember that the idea of essentials is very indefinite and might be stretched by the Puritan to cover nearly the whole body of his faith. Cotton's theory then left practically no room for dissent. "Liberty of conscience," said he, "is to be granted to men that fear God." Neither had he anything new to present respecting the relations of the state and the church. Like his predecessors, he started out with the assumption that their spheres were different; but so strong was his belief that the maintenance of orthodoxy was necessary to political weal, that before the argument had progressed far he utterly confounded the work of the two. He admitted that the church alone might deal with heresy in

the abstract. But heresy, when taught, immediately became concrete. It then, he said, begets social evil and corrupts the state. Though the church expel such teachers, they remain to poison society. The magistrate must then interfere to remove them, as the Jews banished unclean persons from the congregation. It must be supposed that the magistrates are duly qualified for this work, though ignorance on their part of the essentials of religion would not justify them in withholding their assistance from the church. Laws about religion, he said, are truly civil laws, because they so intimately concern the welfare of the state. The magistrate must take the pagans for an example, and cherish religion as he would honesty or the other virtues.

Williams met this argument at once with the assertion that "all civil states, with their officers of justice, in their respective constitutions and administrations, are proved essentially civil, and therefore not judges, governors or defenders of the spiritual or Christian state or worship." He compared the church to a society of physicians or a trading company, which might be formed and dissolved without disturbing the civil power. Changes made by or within it should be purely voluntary. That even the existence of the church was not an absolute condition of civil prosperity, he attempted to show by the history of the pagan nations. Legitimate and well-ordered states had existed in the heathen world. Not only was this true, but within the Christian state itself variety of belief was not an evil. Both history and current experience proved that unbelievers might make good citizens. He claimed that neither Christ nor the apostles required strict religious conformity. They were indifferent to physical aid. They relied on spiritual weapons, for their object was not the establishment of a material kingdom, but of a power which should rule over the hearts of men. Religion was solely an affair of the conscience, within whose holy temple no magistrate could enter. Christ had abolished the Jewish system of a national religion. Its history therefore could furnish no precedents which were binding on Christians. Upon these grounds Williams pleaded for the broad-

est possible toleration, both of Jew and Gentile, Catholic and Protestant, and for the total separation of church from state. He would even have education secularized. The magistrate, he said, owes to the church the submission of his own soul, and the protection of its members and estates against injury; but the last two duties he also owes to false religions.

After thus stating his fundamental principle, Williams proceeded to show the practical difficulties in the way of enforcing conformity. It was in the first place impossible, he said, to agree upon the essentials of the true faith. Of the New England Puritans, some thought that partial communion might be maintained with the English church, others that that church was Antichrist. According to the accepted theory, the latter should persecute the former. But if the Puritans in power were not agreed upon such important points, how expect to reach universal agreement? Further, the magistrates to whom the enforcement of conformity must be entrusted were not capable of exercising their power aright, for they could not truly discern the will of God. Hence those whose opinions they sought to correct were the victims of arbitrary power. If all governments continued to persecute, there would be no place left in the civilized world where those who claimed freedom of conscience could live. They must take refuge in the wilderness, as he himself had done. Even then they might be pursued, and find that there was no room for them upon the earth.

Not only did Williams' keen sense of independence revolt against such coercion of the human spirit, — soul-rape and murder, as he called it, — but his feelings were shocked and his sympathies aroused by the thought of the untold bodily and mental sufferings which persecution had caused. He pictured to himself the horrors of the wars, the massacres, the assassinations, the torturings and cruel deaths, the rending of family ties, the devastating of towns, nay of whole countries even, which had been caused by that spirit of intolerance and strife that had established itself where Christ had come to proclaim liberty and peace. This gave to his plea for freedom a touch

of the humanitarianism of the next century, and a fervor for which Cotton's proud confidence in the truth of his dogmatic system was an inadequate substitute. At times Williams' enthusiasm for freedom and humanity found utterance in passages of a style decidedly Miltonic.<sup>1</sup> To his mind, as between liberty and artificial conformity, there was no question on which side the advantages lay. Liberty would solve all difficulties, restraint would increase them. The progress of the truth had been hindered instead of promoted by resort to force. Williams was an opponent of war, whether dynastic, commercial or religious. But in the domain of religion especially did he believe that peace and truth are allies. Without the former, the latter could not be perceived or accepted.

Cotton's assertions about the actual relations between church and state in Massachusetts Williams met with a flat denial. He said that heresy was both recognized and punished, though "with a sword of a finer gilt" than that used in the old world. He ridiculed Cotton's argument that men were punished there, not for conscience, but for sinning against conscience. He referred to the fact that the ministers were not wholly supported by voluntary contributions. He analyzed the policy of Massachusetts in detail and showed how inconsistent it was with the proper theory of the separation of church from state. A state church, he concluded, had really been established in that colony. The contrast between her treatment of dissenters and the demands which the Puritans had made while in England was duly emphasized.

It is difficult for one living now to do justice to these controversialists. In stating their arguments the writer is tempted to cast a slur at Cotton and to grow enthusiastic over Williams. We see at once that the Boston pastor lived in an age that was passing away. He held views of life which were becoming obsolete. The Reformation which he defended had brought a principle to the front which, when combined with the revival of secular learning, was destined to make the grosser forms of

<sup>1</sup> This is true especially of the eloquent peroration to the Bloody Tenent yet more Bloody.

persecution impossible. The Protestant reaction against the excesses of Münster was undoubtedly necessary and most serviceable. In this Calvinism bore a leading part. But the time had passed when a single sect could make its claim to universal supremacy valid. That was inconsistent with the spirit of Protestantism itself, and with facts which were multiplying every day. Still for a time it was natural that sects should claim exclusive possession of truth and infer from that their divine right to rule. This both the Anglican and the Presbyterian had done in England. The Independent was attempting the same thing in America. Cotton was abreast of his times, but not one step ahead of them. He defended a system of which he formed a part, with which his thoughts and feelings were in agreement. He believed that it embraced truths of infinite value, which, when accepted, developed characters of the noblest type. Such being the conditions, nearly all of his contemporaries would have argued as he did. They would have said: Let the extent to which force is employed to defend the system vary with the peril to which it is exposed. That Puritanism contained much which was worth defending, no one who has studied its history will deny. Cotton held an honorable place among its apologists. If he was in the modern sense narrow and unscientific, so were his times. His defence of persecution, revolting as many of its passages are, is written in a milder and more apologetic tone than that assumed by some of the earlier Protestants, to say nothing of the Catholics. The arrogant spirit which he showed in the discussion was surely in part begotten of the system which he defended. It was the natural product of belief in a dogmatic system which had met with worldly success. Massachusetts showed the same spirit in dealing with her weaker neighbors. Still all that can be said in Cotton's defence amounts to only a relative justification. It is the merit of Williams that he took an important step in advance of his contemporaries, and so opened a new way of escape from the most serious evil of his generation.

To Williams more than to any other man among English-speaking peoples belongs the honor of expounding and defend-

ing the theory of the secularized state. The germ of it appears, as we have seen, in the writings of Calvin. It was inherent in the very idea of the Reformation. Renewed study of the first three Christian centuries necessarily brought it again to the front. But it had been obscured by an unscientific use of Jewish history, by the influence of mediæval ideas, and by the necessity which struggling churches felt for the support of the secular power. Williams, in spite of his Calvinism, was led by his love of independence, his strong emotions and the sufferings he endured, to adopt the theory and carry it to its logical conclusion. He was evidently brought to accept this view by feeling rather than by argument. The culture of the Renaissance was as foreign to him as to Cotton. Allusions to art, to the Elizabethan literature, to the ancient classics are scarcely to be found in his books. The basis of his culture was essentially Puritan. Everything he wrote has the theological rather than the humanistic cast. His attacks were directed solely against the constraints which Puritans and all other religious sects laid upon tender consciences like his own. He had felt the pain which this caused. He saw the disastrous results to which it led. He was driven into extreme revolt thereby, and became the staunch defender of voluntarism. This doctrine was simple, as the theory of *laissez faire* is, when applied to any group of social relations. Sects must learn to co-exist. They must break their union with the state and compete freely for the support of mankind. By doing this they would lose some artificial support, but they would gain in real vigor; and above all persecution would become impossible. The state could thus perform its proper functions, without being diverted therefrom by the demands of the church. It would be relieved of great burdens, and its subjects freed from the prospect of endless misery.

Many, both in England and the colonies, were prepared to listen to this doctrine. The leaven of toleration had been silently working within the Puritan body, though Cotton and his associates had not perceived it. Still they found each successive act of persecution harder to carry through and more difficult to

defend than its predecessor. Winthrop, at the close of his life, expressed doubt respecting the wisdom of the policy. But the Puritan colonies felt too weak to do without it, and so persecution and constraint were resorted to in Massachusetts till after the home government interfered on behalf of the Anglican residents. The magistrates and clergy then found themselves unsupported by public opinion, and the system collapsed. Toleration was secured by the retirement of the state from all control over ecclesiastical affairs. The theory of Williams obtained legal recognition in all the states when they separated from England and united into a federation.

Viewed in the light of general politics, this cannot be regarded as a solution of the most difficult problem which confronts a Christian state. Church and state are not related to each other as two separate spheres whose circumferences touch, but whose existence is otherwise distinct. They are parts of a common social organism. Williams, in his eagerness to escape from the control of a narrow-minded and intolerant clergy, dealt that organism a serious blow. He lopped off one of its members, and thereby put difficulties in the way of the moral and to a certain extent of the intellectual education of the nation. Instead of untying the knot, he cut it. He sought a remedy for a serious evil by denying the existence of what really is. He was the forerunner of the modern individualist, who thinks all that is needed is to loosen social bonds and give to private enterprise the freest scope. The so-called divorce of church from state may succeed in a country in which the great majority of the population is Protestant and in which, therefore, there can be no important religious dispute. But in a country whose population is divided with approximate equality between confessions having widely varying ideals, there will be a religious question, involving also different types of culture. To this question, under these circumstances, government cannot be indifferent. It must control and harmonize passions of such volcanic energy, or be itself swept away amid fierce party conflict. Under such conditions a policy based on the theory of Williams must fail. It would occasion rather than hinder persecution.

Men would be forced to return to the fundamental thought of Cotton, and to reassert, not for partisan ends but in the interests of the whole people, the organic nature of the connection between church and state.

But while Puritans were laying the foundations of civil and religious polity in New England, institutions were being remodelled in the parent country by men of the same belief. Political thought was more active there than it has been at any subsequent time. The Presbyterians, like the conservative Puritans of New England, endeavored to establish by law their aristocratic system of church government. During the civil war they and the Independents were agreed as to the necessity of retaining the King, but they wished so to limit his power as to make Parliament supreme.<sup>1</sup> Neither of these sects yet accepted the principle of religious toleration. But, naturally, among the believers in the Independent system of church government were to be found the republicans of the time and the few Puritans who desired toleration, or, if need be, the total separation of the civil from the ecclesiastical power. Yet it was to be expected that tradition and long-established institutions would in the older country prevent the general acceptance of theories which in the colonies could be put into practice almost without resistance. Still, during the two decades between 1640 and 1660, England and her Puritan colonies were moving in the same general direction. The bonds of sympathy between them

<sup>1</sup> The doctrine advocated by Eliot and Pym in the Commons was that Parliament, consisting of the Lords and Commons and representing the nation, was the sovereign power in England. They conceived of Parliament as a body separate from and hostile to the King. The conflicts of the time prevented them from seeing the necessary union of the two, and that it was revolutionary to predicate sovereignty of Parliament apart from the King. William Prynne was the leading pamphleteer among the Puritans who wrote upon the legal aspects of the controversy. His views may be found scattered through almost innumerable pamphlets issued between the opening of the Long Parliament and the Restoration. His most ambitious effort, *The Sovereign Power of Parliaments and Kingdoms*, though filled with heaps of pedantic rubbish, represents well the views of the Puritans of the Long Parliament. The argument rests wholly upon the dualistic conception of the relations between Parliament and monarch. Prynne labors to cite as many historical instances as he can in which the Houses, backed by the nation, have limited the King's power, hindered him in the prosecution of his policy or dethroned him. By Puritans quite as much as by Cavaliers was the history of England twisted to suit partisan ends.



were stronger than at any subsequent time. A brief review of the development of English Puritan thought respecting politics during that period will prove this, and will also show wherein the colonists, who were somewhat in advance of their brethren, exerted an influence upon them.

It is clear that the downfall of the system of Strafford and Laud was followed by a rapid growth of Independency in England.<sup>1</sup> Opinions which had long been cherished in secret could then be expressed, and the conditions were favorable for their reception. Some of the exiles returned from Holland. Not only was emigration to New England checked, but some influential men returned and others were tempted so to do. Previous to this much interest had been shown by the English Presbyterians and Independents in the growth of the ecclesiastical system of New England. As early as 1637 the New England ministers began, at the request of their brethren at home, to explain and defend their form of church government. Between that time and the establishment of the Protectorate a large number of brief statements and treatises on the subject were sent by the New England clergy to London for publication. As many of the ablest among the Puritan ministers of England had removed to America, it was natural that their writings should attract much attention. That they did so is proved by the fact that nearly all of them elicited replies from the Presbyterians.<sup>2</sup> It was intended that these books should influence English affairs, and therefore they were sent in the largest numbers about 1644, when the Westminster Assembly was beginning its sessions. Henry Vane, the younger, ex-governor of Massachusetts, was a member of that body, and was ready, with the five Independent ministers who had seats, to defend the New England form of church government. Outside, Hugh Peters, Thomas Welde, Hanserd Knollys, men who were well acquainted with New England, were actively supporting the same cause. A little later they were joined by Edward Wins-

<sup>1</sup> See Hanbury's Memorials, II; Masson's Life and Times of Milton, II and III; Fletcher's History of Independency, III.

<sup>2</sup> Hanbury's Memorials, II.

low. To the influence of these men must be added that of those relatives of the New England Puritans who had remained in the mother country, and of the sons who, having been sent back to be educated, had finally settled in England. The Earl of Warwick, too, with Lords Brooke<sup>1</sup> and Say, must have been influenced to some extent by what they knew to have occurred in New England. Independency was familiarly spoken of as "the New England way." Its successful working, though in remote colonies, must have strengthened the belief and arguments of its supporters at home.

But in England, as everywhere else at that time, theological debates gave rise to political issues. At the time of which we are speaking the Puritans had long been acting as a political party. The Independents formed the left wing of this body. The same types of opinion are observable among them as among the New England colonists. The political programmes of the two bodies were very similar. All the English Independents became republicans, holding more or less extreme views, and among them a growing party favored toleration. The radicals advocated the separation of church from state. When in 1644 Roger Williams went to England to negotiate for the Rhode Island charter, he found that Henry Burton and John Goodwin,<sup>2</sup> two of the leading Independent ministers of London, were defending the views which he himself had adopted. Williams at once addressed to the Westminster Assembly a pamphlet in which he condemned all state churches, as unwarranted by the gospel.<sup>3</sup> He queried whether a national church could be upheld "without a racking and tormenting of the souls as well as of the bodies of persons." Truth and peace, he declared, could not flourish under it, and it must lead to formalism,

<sup>1</sup> In 1641 Lord Brooke published his *Discourse on Episcopacy*, in which he not only defended the Puritan ideal of church government, but wrote so nobly in favor of toleration that his book is a worthy precursor of Milton's *Areopagitica*. See Gardiner, *History of England*, X, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Burton had been pilloried with Bastwick and Prynne in 1637. Goodwin was the successor of John Davenport in the pastorate of St. Stephen's, Coleman Street, London.

<sup>3</sup> *Queries of Highest Consideration, etc.* Reprinted in the Publications of the Narragansett Club, II.

hypocrisy and persecution. This was soon followed by the issue of the *Bloody Tenent of Persecution*. It was altogether the most important plea for toleration which any Puritan had then made, and accordingly the book was burned by the Presbyterians. At the same time the younger Vane, with whom Williams was on intimate terms, was pleading in the Westminster Assembly for complete religious toleration. In September of this year Cromwell, aided by St. John and Vane, obtained an order from Parliament that a way be found by the assembly for the toleration of Independents, and if possible for a union between them and the Presbyterians. Two months later appeared Milton's *Areopagitica*, in which the widest liberty of thought was urged for all except papists. About the same time Lieutenant-Colonel John Lilburne, the most thoroughgoing radical of the period, a man whom Cromwell liked but did not trust, began his career as a violent opponent of all the existing institutions of government. To his numerous pamphlets, issued for the most part from prison and filled with denunciations of the monarchy, the nobility, the church, even the Commonwealth itself after it had been established, and with demands for the greatest possible religious, political and economic freedom, one must go, in order to understand the views of the Levellers, the ultimate product of the Independent movement in the seventeenth century. There will be found statements of the theory of contract and of the deductions which follow logically from it, that might have been written in France a century later.<sup>1</sup>

Although the Presbyterians controlled both Parliament and the assembly, their triumph was short. Cromwell early accepted the doctrine of toleration and carried it into practice in the army. Its ranks were soon filled with Independents and adherents of the more extreme views which were then known

<sup>1</sup> Among the more important of Lilburne's pamphlets are *England's Birth-Right Justified* (1645); *London's Liberty in Chains Discovered* (two parts, 1646); *Vox Plebis* (1646); *Royal Tyrannie Discovered* (1647); *The Legal Fundamental Liberties of the People of England Vindicated* (1649); *A Declaration of Some Proceedings of Lieut.-Col. John Lilburne and his Associates* (1648); the *Trial of Lieut.-Col. J. L.* (1649).

as Anabaptism and Antinomianism. A large part of both the officers and the soldiers were republicans, and many adopted ultra-democratic theories.<sup>1</sup> During 1646 and 1647 the breach between Parliament and the army developed. Early in the latter year the army organized under the lead of the Agitators and became an active political force. The occasion of this was the resolve of Parliament, adopted after the retirement of the Scots, that the soldiers should be paid off, a part of them sent to Ireland and the rest as far as possible disbanded. This resolution was carried by the Presbyterian majority. As soon as the action became known political agitation in the army began. At Saffron Walden in April, 1647, meetings were held and protests drawn up. Parliament declared the petitions which the officers presented offensive and ordered the mutinous proceedings to cease. June 4 and 5 a rendezvous was held at Newmarket; a week later another at Triploe Heath, near Cambridge. At Newmarket a solemn engagement to secure equal rights and common liberty was entered into, and a council was organized. Shortly afterwards the King was seized and brought into the camp. Preparations were then made for an advance on London, while Parliament was ordered to expel eleven of the foremost Presbyterian leaders. Early in August the troops entered the capital, but, meeting with no resistance, encamped at Putney. The King was taken to Hampton Court.

The political views of the army as a whole are best stated in the Heads of the Proposals, drawn up by Ireton, August 1, 1647, to be presented to the King and to Parliament.<sup>2</sup> In these, biennial Parliaments were demanded, the members of which should be elected in districts whose population should be equalized by the disfranchisement of small boroughs and the bestowment of the seats thus vacated on the large counties. The freedom of elections should be guarded as carefully as possible. The subject should be protected in all possible ways against

<sup>1</sup> Masson, III, 523 and 146 *et seq.*, gives a good description of the army and of the ideas that prevailed in it.

<sup>2</sup> Rushworth, VII, 731-736. Reprinted by S. R. Gardiner, *Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution*, p. 232.

arbitrary judicial proceedings. For ten years control over land and sea forces and the appointment of the great officers of state should be entrusted to Parliament. After that Parliament should share with the King the power of appointment. All acts enforcing religious conformity should be repealed and all church officers should be deprived of the power to coerce by civil penalties. To this programme, which was to be carried immediately into effect, were added demands for the abolition of all monopolies and restraints on freedom of trade, for the removal of unnecessary irregularities in taxation, for the reformation of the tithe system, for the simplification of legal procedure, for full liberty of petition and for laws of debt more favorable to the debtor. This manifesto called for changes which were then utterly impracticable under the monarchy. Many of them proved too sweeping even for the Commonwealth.

The Heads of Proposals, however, were laid before the King, while the Parliament again brought forward the Newcastle propositions. Charles, probably to secure time by prolonging the negotiation, declared that he preferred the scheme of the army. But in the camp at Putney the Levellers had now become very strong. The arguments of Lilburne and his resistance of government had given them confidence. The Agitators had fully adopted Levelling principles, which were nothing else than thorough-going democracy. The lower tradespeople and artisans of London were rapidly adopting the same opinions. In the camp the Agitators now refused to listen to the Proposals or to any scheme of compromise with the King or Parliament. They declared that the King could not be trusted, and that no more dealings should be had with him. They accused the officers, especially Cromwell, of selfish ambition, because they continued to negotiate with Charles.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The feelings and views of the Levellers during the autumn of 1647 may be gathered from John Wildman's Putney Projects. This is an argument against the Heads of Proposals and the conciliatory policy which the generals seemed at the time to be pursuing toward the King. It abounds in denunciation of Cromwell, as the betrayer of the liberties of England. A new Parliament elected by universal suffrage is demanded; and it is insisted that it should sit until every petition from the people was answered.

While feeling throughout the army was in this condition, the Levellers issued their first declaration of principles,<sup>1</sup> October 15, 1647. It was signed by the agents of five regiments of horse which were under the command respectively of Cromwell, Ireton, Fleetwood, Rich and Whalley. This document was extremely democratic in tone. It spoke boldly on the people's behalf and was in fact the herald of the approaching meeting. It demanded not only that the previous remonstrances of the army should be heeded and a date fixed for the dissolution of the existing Parliament, but that thereafter elections should be by manhood suffrage.

Whereas, [the paper runs] all power is originally and essentially in the whole body of the people of this nation, and whereas their free choice or consent by their representatives is the only original or foundation of all just government, and the reason and end of the choice of all just governors whatsoever is their apprehension of safety and good by them ; that it be insisted upon positively that the supreme power of the people's representors, or Commons assembled in Parliament, be forthwith clearly declared.

After specifying more particularly the right of absolute Parliamentary control over legislation and over the appointment, removal and punishment of officers, they demand

that all obstructions to the freedom and equality of the people's choice of their representors, either by patents, charters or usurpations by pretended customs, be removed by these present Commons in Parliament, and that such a freedom of choice be provided for as the people may be equally represented.

The Agitators then ask that the excise on all English commodities be removed and taxes imposed on foreign goods instead ; that investments in the shares of the merchant companies of London be heavily taxed to pay the arrears of the army ; that commons and unsold church lands be reserved for public use ; that all monopolies be abolished ; that prison abuses and long detention of prisoners without trial cease. A demand was also made that no one should be forced to incriminate himself. The

<sup>1</sup> Case of the Army truly Stated. 24 pp. This was signed at Guilford October 9. The leading name in the list of signers was Robert Everard.

sentiments of the previous manifestoes on the matter of toleration were repeated with the addition that the tithe system be abolished. No privileges should be granted by which individuals or classes were raised above the law. A committee should be appointed to reform law and procedure "that withal, the laws might be reduced to a smaller number, to be comprised in one volume in the English tongue, that every free commoner might understand his own proceedings" and processes be short and speedy.<sup>1</sup> Other grievances, it was said, could be mentioned and would be presented by the counties, but those stated could be remedied at once. A large number of the above demands were also made in various petitions presented to Parliament by the Levellers of London during 1647.<sup>2</sup>

The theory of the Levellers is further illustrated by the Agreement of the People, which was also drawn up in October, 1647.<sup>3</sup> It purported to have been agreed to by the army, and was laid before the people for their acceptance. It was evidently regarded as a social compact, which, in the form of a written constitution, was to proceed from the people as the source of sovereignty and to define the functions of the Parliament and of all the authorities of the state. The people would thus be protected against the otherwise arbitrary power of Parliament, and, if at any time that body should become corrupt, the liberties of the nation could not be destroyed.<sup>4</sup> The framers of this document contemplated only one governing body, a House of Commons. After the mode of election, the organization and the powers of this body have been described, the rights reserved by the people are stated. They are freedom of religious belief, exemption from impressment, protection against suits growing out of anything said or done during the late war, and equality of all before the law. Laws also must be made for

<sup>1</sup> Compare with this the effort of Barebone's Parliament to reform the Court of Chancery.

<sup>2</sup> Some of them are printed in a pamphlet entitled *Gold Tried in the Fire, or Burnt Petitions Revised*. 12 pp. Many petitions of like sentiments were presented to Parliament from London and other towns in 1648. See Masson, III, 613.

<sup>3</sup> *An Agreement of the People for a Firm and Present Peace upon Grounds of Common Right and Freedom*. 14 pp.

<sup>4</sup> See Introduction to the Agreement, p. 9.

the public good. "These things," they say in conclusion, "we declare to be our native rights, and therefore are agreed and resolved to maintain them with our utmost possibilities against all opposition whatsoever. . . ." The Agreement in the above form was never laid before Parliament, for a few weeks after its issue occurred the abortive mutiny of the regiments at Ware. After being softened in tone, however, and variously modified, it was presented to Parliament, January 20, 1649.<sup>1</sup> In this earliest scheme of a written constitution proposed in England the views of the Levellers found their last authoritative expression. That their ideal, save in the matter of toleration, was the same as that of the New England Puritans, is evident. Upon that question experience forced them to accept the opinions of Williams. Almost every political reform which they desired was secured by enactment in the colonies. They were logical and consistent republicans, and at the same time Independents in their theory of church government. Doubtless in the case of the great majority of them religious convictions had led to the adoption of their political views.

The revolutionary energy thus developed in England was not sufficient so to level the old institutions as to make the establishment of a new and radically different system possible. Still the work of the Agitators was not without immediate and important result. The King was led by their threatening attitude to escape to the Isle of Wight and to open negotiations again with the Scots. The prospect of another civil war thus became imminent. Its approach put an end to dissensions in the army and convinced the officers, if they had not so believed before, that the view of Charles' character taken by the Agitators was correct. After the suppression of the mutiny the army promised to submit to the control of Parliament. As danger from the Scots increased, dissensions within its ranks disappeared. There was great searching of heart to find, if possible, the cause of the new misfortunes. At an army prayer-meeting held at Windsor, April, 1648, there was a remarkable exhibition of religious fervor. It ended with the adoption of a

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted in its final form by Gardiner, *Constitutional Documents etc.*, pp. 270-282.



resolution not only to fight the Scots, but, "if ever the Lord brought us back again in peace, to call Charles Stuart, that man of blood, to an account for the blood he had shed and mischief he had done to his utmost against the Lord's cause and people in these poor nations."<sup>1</sup> This was a consummation which the Levellers had long desired. From the spring of 1648 the progress of events leading to the execution of the King was steady and direct. The influence of the army became decisive. The council of officers continued its sessions. The officers also resumed their seats in Parliament and began to control its deliberations. Then came the second civil war and the triumph over the Scots. That made the army supreme. Its republicanism could now overcome all opposition. Events hastened on the trial and execution of the King. But even before the trial began the Commons declared "that the people are under God the original of all just power" and "that the Commons of England in Parliament assembled, being chosen by and representing the people, have the supreme power in this nation."

But the influence of ancient customs and institutions was so great, the enemies foreign and domestic which threatened the Commonwealth were so numerous, that compromises were necessary. Though democratic ideas continued as strong as ever in the army and throughout the country, the theorist had to give way to the man of tact and energy. Therefore after the Commonwealth was established the Levellers found themselves as far as ever from the realization of their ideals. All hope that the Agreement of the People would become the basis of the English government had to be abandoned when the Long Parliament was dissolved in 1653. The subsequent restlessness of the Levellers only forced Cromwell to resort to more severe measures of repression, and thereby to deviate further from the type of government he would have preferred.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Carlyle, *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, Harper's Edition, I, 256.

<sup>2</sup> One can see in Cromwell's letters and speeches how firmly he believed in toleration, and yet how difficult it was, amid so many jarring sects, to maintain it. See especially his letter to the governor of Edinburgh Castle (1650) and his speeches to the first and second Parliaments of the Protectorate. Carlyle, I, 479, 482; II, 88, 109, 138, 219.

About the time of the execution of the King appeared the first group of Milton's political pamphlets. They at once proved him to be the greatest defender of the Commonwealth. Next to Cromwell he was the best exponent of its spirit. To the theory of the divine origin of the kingship he opposed that of the divine origin of the popular will. This, he argued, found its original expression in the social compact by which, after the period of freedom that preceded the fall, governments were instituted. By mutual agreement towns, cities and commonwealths were founded, laws passed and magistrates appointed.<sup>1</sup> The law then, because it is the expression of the popular will, must be supreme. King and people are subject to it. The office of the monarch exists for the benefit of the nation. Should its occupant attempt to violate the laws, he may be restrained by an oath, which is a special covenant between him and the people. Even though he be not a tyrant, they may, if they choose, remove him from the throne and elect another; much more is this the right of the people, if their king be a tyrant. Upon this principle he defended the execution of Charles I.<sup>2</sup> In Milton's opinion governments, except in an undefined sense which applies to the whole creation, are of human origin. An unjust government, he said, was in no sense God-ordained. Hence, when he came to consider the religious question, he advocated the total separation of church from state.<sup>3</sup> He would exclude only the papists from toleration, because he thought them more truly a political faction than a church. With that exception his ideas agreed entirely with those of Williams. When, therefore, during the Commonwealth, the perplexing question arose whether or not there should be a state church, Milton's voice was raised in the negative. Vane agreed with him and labored for the same end. Cromwell sympathized with their opinions, but could not see his way clear to adopt them in practice. In 1652, when the question was pending before Parlia-

<sup>1</sup> Milton's best statement of the theory of compact is in the *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*.

<sup>2</sup> See Milton's *Eikonoklastes* and his two *Defences of the People of England*.

<sup>3</sup> See the *Second Defence of the People of England*, and the pamphlets written during his later life.

ment, the defenders of separation received important aid from the apostle of the idea in New England.<sup>1</sup>

Early in 1652 Roger Williams, accompanied by Clarke, the Baptist preacher, went to England on business connected with the interests of Rhode Island. He remained abroad two years. During that time he lived on the most intimate terms with Sir Henry Vane, saw a great deal of Milton, had interviews with Cromwell and held intercourse with many other leaders of the Commonwealth.<sup>2</sup> When he arrived in England, Rev. John Owen, Cromwell's favorite preacher, and a number of other prominent clergymen were trying to induce Parliament to pass a bill for supplying the whole Commonwealth with an able preaching ministry. A list of essential articles of belief had been prepared, which the state was to impose upon all who received livings. The government was also to undertake a scheme for propagating the gospel throughout the colonies.<sup>3</sup> If these measures were carried out, the state-church system would be revived, though in a form less strict than that which the Presbyterians desired. Williams at once threw himself into the controversy. Among the many petitions against the scheme which were presented to the committee having the bill in charge, was one signed by Major Butler and others. For the edition of this which was published, Williams wrote a preface and extended comments, setting forth his theory of toleration and of the secular nature of government.<sup>4</sup> The readmission of the Jews into England had been proposed, and Williams was very emphatic in its favor. At first it was thought that Cromwell favored the voluntary system of religion. Williams, encouraged by this impression to hope for success, published his *Bloody Tenent yet more Bloody*.

<sup>1</sup> See especially Masson, *Life and Times of Milton*, IV, 387-398.

<sup>2</sup> The proof of this may be found in the letter's written home by Williams during his absence. Most of them are addressed to John Winthrop, Jr. See also his letters to Mrs. Sadlier, daughter of Sir Edward Coke. All are in the *Publications of the Narragansett Club*, vol. vi.

<sup>3</sup> The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel had been founded in 1649.

<sup>4</sup> See the Fourth Paper presented by Major Butler to the Honorable Committee of Parliament for the Propagation of the Gospel, with a testimony to the said Fourth Paper, by way of explanation upon the Four Proposals of it, by R. W. This was issued in March, 1652.

To this he prefixed an address to Parliament, urging it, in view of the great things it had done, its own dangers and the fate of the old ecclesiastical system, to strike down all images and maintain mercy, justice and freedom of conscience. In another pamphlet<sup>1</sup> he attacked the tithe system. Clarke also issued his *Ill News from New England*, in which he described the persecution which he and Obadiah Holmes had been forced to endure in Massachusetts. Both the pamphlets and letters of Williams show that during the whole of 1652 he bore an active part in the agitation for complete freedom of worship in England. The committee, however, made little progress with the subject, and before any conclusion was reached the Long Parliament was dissolved (April 30, 1653) and the Protectorate established. In 1654 Williams returned to America, leaving Milton and Vane to defend the views which all three held in common.

Cromwell now inaugurated his plan of modified toleration, which continued in force till the eve of the Restoration. In the Instrument of Government it was provided that the worship of all who professed "faith in God by Jesus Christ" should be tolerated, if they did not use this freedom "to the civil injury of others and the disturbance of the public peace." Liberty was "not to be extended to popery, prelacy or the practice of licentiousness."<sup>2</sup> Though the restrictions on freedom of worship embodied in the Humble Petition and Advice,<sup>3</sup> which went into force in 1657, were more numerous than those just mentioned, there is no evidence that there was any change of policy. Strict principles were not followed. The course adopted was a compromise between Cromwell's desires and the necessity of suppressing opposition to a new government which was beset by difficulties on all sides. Newspapers were strictly controlled, but the issue of controversial pamphlets was practically free from restraint. Toleration of religious sects was so much greater than in Massachusetts, that Williams said New England was becoming old while Old England was becoming new.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Hireling Ministry none of Christ's.

<sup>2</sup> Gardiner, Documents, p. 324.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 341; see section xi.

<sup>4</sup> For the character and results of Cromwell's policy in this matter, see Masson, V. pp. 51-86.

Before Cromwell's death Vane issued his most important writings in favor of democratic government and toleration.<sup>1</sup> In one he proposed the adoption of a written constitution. His Fifth Monarchy ideas, however, brought him into conflict with Cromwell. His uncompromising democracy led him to oppose all the later policy of the Protectorate, and brought him into prison and finally to the scaffold. After Cromwell's death, Milton by his later pamphlets<sup>2</sup> tried to check the growth of public sentiment in favor of the restoration of the monarchy and the church. In these writings he gave utterance to his matured views in support of democratic government and church disestablishment. In 1656 Harrington issued his *Oceana*, followed by other works between that date and 1660.<sup>3</sup> In these he expounded the theory of a constitutional republic, wherein political power should be derived from the consent of the governed and should be perpetuated by elections with the ballot and by rotation in office. Religious freedom should be granted to all except Jews and Roman Catholics. The Rota Club was organized to discuss and extend these views.

But the opposite tendency soon became so strong that republican writers could no longer find a hearing. The Presbyterians, who had joined the revolt against Charles I, began soon after the death of Cromwell to clamor for the restoration of the monarchy with the limitations which had been imposed upon it previous to the outbreak of the civil war.<sup>4</sup> So far as England was concerned, democratic theories must wait for other times and other defenders. Still Puritan ideas had become too firmly established in the English mind to be eradicated. Even within

<sup>1</sup> See *A Retired Man's Meditations* (1655) and *A Healing Question Propounded and Resolved* (1656).

<sup>2</sup> *A Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes* (1659), and *the Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* (1660).

<sup>3</sup> *Harrington's Works*, edited by Toland, 1737.

<sup>4</sup> See Prynne's later pamphlets. Also Baxter's suggestive work, *The Holy Commonwealth*, written in reply to Harrington (1659). The influence of the reaction upon Baxter can be most clearly seen. In his *Christian Politics*, published in 1673, he argued that all civil power comes from God. By compact the people may determine the number of their rulers, to a certain extent limit the exercise of their power, and name the person or family that shall rule. The duty of obedience was most strongly enforced. See *Baxter's Practical Works*, VI, p. 23 *et seq.*

the Anglican church the doctrine of natural right and social compact had been proclaimed by Hooker. Hales, Chillingworth, Fuller, Jeremy Taylor had preached toleration upon the broadest grounds. Falkland had been the representative of latitudinarian opinions in the Long Parliament. During the period of the Restoration both the Puritans and the liberal churchmen contended for toleration. When the Commonwealth fell, John Locke, himself the son of Puritan parents, had completed his education at Oxford. In him the ideas and tendencies of the Puritan united with those of the latitudinarian of the English church. He thus became the representative of the epoch of the English Revolution, the exponent of the Whig theory of compact and the defender of religious toleration. When newly interpreted by Samuel Adams and Rousseau, Locke's exposition of the ideas which he had inherited furnished an important impulse toward both the American and the French Revolution. Though the Puritans and their descendants have never been more than a party in England and though circumstances have greatly changed, the nation in its history has now reached a point where it is necessary to discuss the very questions which they tried to answer. It is not without interest to compare the arguments of the seventeenth century for and against tithes, disestablishment and the continuance of the House of Lords, with those uttered by statesmen now.

If this survey of the development of political thought among the Puritans be truthful, one must conclude that the modern revolutionary movement began not in the eighteenth, but in the sixteenth century. Protestantism, especially in the form which Calvin gave to it, was hostile to absolutism both in church and in state, and carried with it a moral vigor without which the mere revival of classical learning would have been powerless to effect deep social changes. Calvin built upon the foundations laid by Augustine and the earlier reformers, but he gave to his work a connection and logical consistency in all its parts which had a profound influence upon the adherents of his doctrines. Calvinism, in spite of the aristocratic character which it temporarily assumed, meant democracy in church government. It

meant more than that, for its aim was to make society in all its parts conform to a religious ideal. Thus only would the perfect commonwealth, the city of God on earth, be realized and established. Ideas derived from the organization of the church, the thought that human distinctions disappear before the sovereignty of God, gave color also to the political views of the Calvinists. They did not need to search the records of antiquity to find communities wherein the theory of human equality was approximately realized. The local church furnished a much better model than any Greek state. The theory upon which it was based was easily transferred to the domain of politics. Wherever the Calvinists appeared as a political party, this transfer was more or less fully made. Their attitude was not due solely to the fact that the monarchy supported Catholicism, or what was considered to be in alliance with it. It was the result of a positive force, which impelled Calvinists to be advocates of popular government. Among the English Puritans this tendency showed itself with various degrees of strength, from the ideas of elective monarchy with a supreme legislature, held by the Presbyterians of the Long Parliament, to the extreme republicanism of the Levellers.

In the English colonies the development of Puritanism was on the whole normal. It was not obstructed by old institutions, and frontier life was favorable to its democratic tendencies. At first we see aristocratic institutions of some strength maintained. As at Geneva, these were defended by the argument that without them the whole ecclesiastical and political system would fall before the attacks of its enemies. This was the excuse which they offered for persecution. Still the men who defended Puritanism, often by selfish and brutal measures, reared, even in Massachusetts, a structure which was essentially democratic. The town meeting differed much from the parish government of England. When demands came from the towns for an increased share in the government of the commonwealth, strenuous opposition was not made by the leaders, except to propositions which seemed inconsistent with steady administration and the maintenance of a consistent policy. Only attempts

to introduce religious innovations called forth passionate resistance. The fear that these might be forced upon the colony by England led to the growth in Massachusetts of a theory of relations to the home government which was strongly separatist in its character. It too was couched in the democratic formulas, which were becoming so popular, respecting agreement and contract. This theory the other New England colonies adopted, because in their social system and the objects they were seeking, they sufficiently resembled Massachusetts, though in so many ways they differed from the mother country. During the early part of the sixteenth century Massachusetts may be said to have constituted the right or conservative wing of Puritanism in America. But with the overthrow of her exclusive religious system that character passed away, and she assumed the purely democratic form which had existed almost from the first in the other New England colonies. Her struggle with the English authorities left also within her a specially strong aptitude for the democratic movement of the eighteenth century.

But it should never be forgotten that the Puritan's conception of democracy was far different from that held by many of its later defenders. There was nothing vulgar about it. The Puritans did not believe that wisdom would be discovered by the counting of heads. They talked little about equality, except the equality of the elect before God. The thought of duty was more often in their minds than that of right. They did not claim for all an equal share of political power. They knew the value of character and intelligence, and were resolved that nothing should rob these of their just influence in a well-ordered commonwealth. They identified liberty with virtue. "Know," says Milton in one of his loftiest passages, "that to be free is the same thing as to be pious, to be wise, to be temperate and just, to be frugal and abstinent, and, lastly, to be magnanimous and brave; so to be the opposite of all these is the same as to be a slave." He who believes implicitly in the wisdom of the multitude, or who places his confidence chiefly in forms of social organization, can have little sympathy with sentiments like these.

HERBERT L. OSGOOD.